

SAFE WORK PRACTICES

LADDER INSPECTIONS & USE *Page 1 of 2*

**This information does not take precedence over OH&S. All employees should be familiar with the Saskatchewan Employment Act and the OH&S Regulations.*

INSPECT LADDERS FOR:

- Missing, loose, broken or defective steps, rungs, cords or other parts.
- Loose nails, screws, bolts or other metal parts.
- Cracked, split, worn or broken rails, braces, steps or rungs (or sharp edges).
- Rough or splintered surfaces, twisted or distorted rails.
- Damaged or worn nonslip feet.
- Missing identification label.
- Paint, corrosion, rust, oxidization and excessive wear, especially on treads.
- Adequate lubrication of moving parts.

DO:

- Inspect ladders before each use.
- Tag defective ladders and take out of service.
- Check fiberglass ladders regularly for cracks and exposed fiberglass.
- Check all nuts, bolts, spreaders and locks for tightness and good repair.
- Check wooden ladders for rot, decay or warped rails.
- Protect wooden ladders with a clear sealer or wood preservative – do not use paint.
- Check all ladders for distortion by sighting along the rails – a ladder that is twisted or distorted is hazardous.
- Replace worn or frayed ropes on extension ladder, lubricated on extension ladders.
- Check the condition of ladders that have fallen or been dropped before using them again.

DON'T:

- Make temporary or makeshift repairs.
- Try to straighten or attempt to use bent or bowed ladders.
- Use a portable ladder or stepladder which has been painted.

SAFE USE:

1. Rest top of ladder against solid surface that can withstand the load. A portable ladder must extend at least one meter above any surface the ladder is used to access.

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2. Attach a ladder stay across the back of ladder where a surface cannot stand the load. Extend the stay across a window for firm support against the building walls or window frame.
3. Guard or fence off the area around a ladder in use where persons have access.
4. Secure a portable ladder at the top to prevent it from slipping sideways or the foot from slipping outwards. A portable ladder in use must slope at an angle of one horizontal to four vertical.
5. If it is not possible to tie off the ladder, have someone hold the foot of the ladder whenever possible. The person at the foot should face the ladder with a hand on each side rail and one foot resting on the bottom run. (This is effective only for ladders up to 5m (16 ft) long.)
6. Attach hooks on top of ladder rails where the ladder is to be used at a constant height.
7. Do not rest the ladder on any rung. Only the side rails are designed for this purpose.
8. Secure the base of the ladder against accidental movement. Securing the ladder at the foot does not prevent side slip at the top.
9. Use only ladders equipped with non-slip feet. Otherwise, nail a cleat to the floor or anchor the feet or bottom of the side rails.
10. Only one person is permitted to climb a section of a ladder at one time.
11. Maintain 3-point contact by keeping two hands and one foot, or two feet and one hand on ladder at all times.
12. Never use a ladder to support a working platform.
13. Never work from the top two rungs or steps of a ladder.
14. Avoid metal ladders where electrical contact is possible.

